(c) if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUODIN): (a) to (c) The Department of Consumer Affairs is administering the "Consumer Protection Act, 1986" which is an instrument for promoting and protecting the rights of the consumers. Consequent upon the decision taken in the 50th National Development Council Meeting held on 21.12.2002, a "National Action Plan for Consumer Awareness and Redressal and Enforcement of Consumer Protection Act, 1986" has been prepared. The Action Plan covers mainly (i) undertaking consumer awareness programmes, (ii) strengthening of consumer grievance redressal machinery and (iii) strengthening of Standards Laboratories of Weights & Measures.

The Public Distribution System administered by Department of Food & Public Distribution is being implemented in the country for distribution of foodgrains and kerosene oil to the ration card holders through a network of 4.81 lakhs Fair Price Shops, at different rates of subsidy to the 'Above Poverty Line', 'Below Poverty Line' and 'Antyodaya Anna Yojna Households'. At present, no proposal/draft on Public Distribution Policy is under consideration.

Corruption in FCI depots in Punjab

2621. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the corruption prevailing in various depots of Foods Corporation of India in Punjab;

(b) the complaints received in this regard during the last three years, year-wise; and

(c) the action taken by Government in this respect?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The details of the complaints received against the employees of various depots of Food Corporation of India (FCI) in

Punjab during the last three years are as under:—

Year	Number of employees against whom complaints received
2003	2830
2004	3895
2005 (Upto September)	4096

(c) The details of the action taken against the delinquent officials are as under:—

Nature of Penalty imposed	2003	2004	2005
Dismissal/removal/compulsorily retired	28	23	58
Reduction in rank	63	56	32
Reduction in time scale of pay	401	192	431
Withholding of increment	54	09	20
Recovery from pay of the loss caused to FCI	1410	2780	2770
Censure	468	520	521
TOTAL	2424	3580	3832

Decreasing sugar mills

† 2622. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that for the last few years, the number of sugar mills and factories is decreasing constantly;

(b) if so, their total number in the country in 2002-03 and the estimated number thereof in 2005-06; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that the despite the decreasing number of sugar mills, the production of sugar in the country is increasing, if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.